

Message Text

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ACTION DLOS-06

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EB-07 EPA-01 ERDA-05 FMC-01 TRSE-00 H-02 INR-07

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TAGS: PLOS, JA

SUBJECT: HOKKAIDO REPRESENTATIVES DEPART FOR LOS CONFERENCE

1. SUMMARY: A GROUP OF EIGHT HOKKAIDO PREFECTURAL OFFICIALS AND FISHERMEN'S REPRESENTATIVES WILL DEPART JAPAN AUGUST 30 TO OBSERVE THE CURRENT SESSION OF THE UN LAW OF THE SEA CONFERENCE. THE GROUP INTENDS TO MEET WITH THE U.S., SOVIET AND OTHER DELEGATIONS TO URGE THAT JAPAN'S CATCH BE MAINTAINED NEAR CURRENT LEVELS WITHIN FOREIGN 200-MILE ECONOMIC ZONES. THE VISIT OF THIS GROUP UNDERSCORES GROWING LOCAL APPREHENSION THAT THE PREFECTURE'S FISHING INDUSTRY, WHICH PROVIDES 25 PERCENT OF JAPAN'S CATCH, WILL BE CRIPPLED BY RESTRICTIONS IMPOSED WITHIN FOREIGN 200-MILE ZONES, PARTICULARLY THAT OF THE U.S. GROUP MEMBERS WARN THAT THIS ISSUE COULD IMPERIL U.S.-JAPAN RELATIONS BECAUSE IT INVOLVES BOTH THE SURVIVAL OF JAPAN'S PELAGIC FISHING INDUSTRY AND THE CONTINUED SUPPLY OF AN IRREPLACEABLE ELEMENT IN THE JAPANESE DIET. END SUMMARY

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2. EIGHT MEMBER HOKKAIDO TEAM WILL TRAVEL TO NEW YORK TO OBSERVE NEXT LOS SESSION. IN ADDITION TO VICE GOVERNOR SHIRO SHIBATA, THE HOKKAIDO OBSERVERS GROUP INCLUDES TWO PROMINENT PREFECTURAL ASSEMBLY MEMBERS--YOSHINOBU MATSUURA, CHAIRMAN OF THE ASSEMBLY'S FISHERY COMMITTEE; AND KEIZO NARA, CHAIRMAN OF THE LIBERAL-DEMOCRATIC ASSEMBLYMEN'S FISHERY LEAGUE. IT ALSO INCLUDES FIVE TOP LEADERS OF PREFECTURAL FISHERMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS: JUNKICHI KANEHIRA, CHAIRMAN OF THE HOKKAIDO FEDERATION OF FISHING CO-OPERATIVES; TSUNEO SETO, CHAIRMAN OF THE HOKKAIDO FEDERATION OF POWER FISHING BOAT COOPERATIVES; MASAO AOKI, MANAGING DIRECTOR OF THE HOKKAIDO LAW OF THE SEA COUNTERMEASURES COMMITTEE; EIICHI ABE, CHAIRMAN OF THE HOKKAIDO CREDIT FEDERATION OF FISHING COOPERATIVES; AND SHINZO KOBAYASHI, DIRECTOR OF THE HOKKAIDO FISHING INDUSTRY FUNDING ASSOCIATION. AOKI AND KOBAYASHI ARE TO DEPART FOR NEW YORK ON AUGUST 30, FOLLOWED BY KANEHIRA AND SETO ON SEPTEMBER 1, AND THE REST ON SEPTEMBER 4.

3. WE MET GROUP MEMBERS AT AMCENTER SHOWING OF RIDGEWAY INTERVIEW ON AUGUST 25 AND AGAIN AT CONSULATE ON AUGUST 26. THEY TOLD US THAT THEY PLAN TO MEET WITH THE DELEGATIONS OF THOSE COUNTRIES MOST IMPORTANT TO HOKKAIDO FISHERMEN TO URGE THAT JAPAN'S FISHING CATCH BE MAINTAINED AT OR NEAR CURRENT LEVELS WITHIN FOREIGN 200-MILE ECONOMIC ZONES. THEY ARE PARTICULARLY CONCERNED BY THE POTENTIALLY DISASTROUS IMPACT OF THE U.S. 200-MILE ZONE ON BOTH THE PREFECTURAL AND NATIONAL FISHING INDUSTRY. THEY SAID THAT DETAILED STUDIES OF THE LIKELY EFFECT OF THE U.S. ZONE ON HOKKAIDO'S ECONOMY WERE STILL IN PROGRESS, BUT IT WAS ASSUMED THAT THE IMPACT WILL BE DEVASTATING, PARTICULARLY IN VIEW OF THE UNPREPAREDNESS OF THE PREFECTURAL GOVERNMENT AND FISHING INDUSTRY. THEY DECLARED THAT THEY HAD BEEN "SHOCKED" BY THE U.S. MOVE BECAUSE THEY HAD BELIEVED THAT THE U.S. WOULD AWAIT THE NEGOTIATION OF A COMPREHENSIVE INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENT ON 200-MILE ZONES AT THE LAW OF THE SEA CONFERENCE. IN THEIR VIEW, AMERICA'S UNILATERAL ACTION REPRESENTS AN INEXPLICABLE ABDICATION OF ITS POSITION OF MORAL LEADERSHIP AT THE CONFERENCE AND TACIT ENCOURAGEMENT OF AN IRRESPONSIBLE INTERNATIONAL SCRAMBLE TO MONOPOLIZE WORLD FISHERY RESOURCES.

4. IN ADDITION TO EXPRESSING BAFFLEMENT AT THE MOTIVATION BEHIND THE U.S. DECISION TO UNILATERALLY ESTABLISH A 200-MILE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ECONOMIC ZONE, THE HOKKAIDO REPRESENTATIVES EMPHASIZED THEIR FEELING OF "BETRAYAL" BY WHAT THEY CONSIDER TO BE THE HARD-LINE POSTURE ADOPTED BY THE U.S. TOWARD JAPAN. THEY FEEL THAT THE U.S. IS DETERMINED TO SET FOREIGN FISHING QUOTAS WITHIN ITS 200-MILE ZONE WITHOUT ADEQUATE CONSIDERATION OF JAPAN'S VITAL ECONOMIC AND DIETARY INTERESTS. THEY POINTED OUT THAT THEY WERE ACCUSTOMED TO SUCH "HIGH-HANDED" TREATMENT IN FISHERY NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE SOVIET UNION, BUT HAD ANTICIPATED A MORE SYMPATHETIC ATTITUDE

FROM THE U.S. WHICH THEY CONSIDER AN ALLY AND FRIEND. SPEAKING AS "FRIENDS" OF THE U.S., THEY WARNED THAT THERE IS A GROWING FEELING OF OUTRAGE IN JAPAN AGAINST THE EVIDENT INTENTION OF THE U.S. TO DENY THE JAPANESE PEOPLE ACCESS TO A VITAL ELEMENT OF THEIR NATIONAL DIET. THEY PREDICTED THAT THIS FEELING COULD EASILY DEVELOP INTO ANTI-U.S. SENTIMENT AND PERHAPS EVEN SPARK WIDESPREAD POPULAR DEMONSTRATIONS.

5. COMMENT: THE VIEWS EXPRESSED BY THIS GROUP CLEARLY REFLECT A GROWING SENSE OF CRISIS WITHIN THE HOKKAIDO FISHING INDUSTRY. THE INTENSITY OF FEELING SEEMS TO STEM LESS FROM A CAREFUL APPRAISAL OF THE POTENTIAL ECONOMIC EFFECTS OF THE U.S. 200-MILE ZONE THAN FROM AN EMOTIONAL CONVICTION THAT A TRUSTED ALLY HAS SUDDENLY AND CAPRICIOUSLY TURNED AGAINST THEM ON AN ISSUE CRUCIAL TO THE WELL-BEING OF THE JAPANESE PEOPLE. EXCEPT PERHAPS IN FISHING PORTS, CONCERN BY THE GENERAL PUBLIC HERE DOES NOT YET MATCH THAT MANIFEST BY FISHING INDUSTRY REPRESENTATIVES. HOWEVER, AS PRESS AND POLITICIANS BEGIN TO GIVE ISSUE INCREASED PLAY IN WEEKS AHEAD, WE EXPECT MORE BROADLY BASED REACTION AND MORE FREQUENT EXPRESSION OF ATTITUDES OF THE SORT WE HAVE ALREADY ENCOUNTERED.

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